

## TFQ Initiative introduces *QTool* electronic clinical support tool

Less than a year after securing a vendor, the Alabama Medicaid Agency went “on the road” in July to introduce *QTool*, its electronic clinical support tool, to physicians, administrators and other health professionals in nine pilot counties as implementation of its Together for Quality (TFQ) Medicaid transformation initiative continued into its second year.

Beginning the week of July 14th, the first of 68 clinic and physician office sites were able to test the new web-based clinical support tool using the providers’ own patient data. A total of 298 providers and 90 medical residents have agreed to participate thus far, with more expected to join as the pilot project continues.

Demonstrated at a July 9 TFQ stakeholder meeting, the first version of the *QTool* allows providers a read-only view of claims-based data on office visits, medications, lab tests and other procedures. The clinical support tool also displays rules-based alerts for management of asthma and diabetes patients. Versions to be released later in 2008 will add provider update/editing capability, a provider message center, e-prescribing capability, a referral function, email, provider dashboard reporting and better management of patient-provider encounter workflow (SOAP) for recording and viewing patient visit records.



*Medicaid Medical Director, Mary McIntyre, M.D., introduces the QTool to Angela Martin, M.D., of Anniston*



*Tina Ledbetter answers questions about QTool from Voncille Lewis, office manager for Montgomery family practice physician Kynard Adams, M.D.*

In addition to the release of *QTool*, several other initiatives related to the TFQ initiative are underway. These include:

- Q4U, the transformation project’s care management program, has enrolled nearly 400 asthma patients and almost 300 diabetic patients in its first six months. Early feedback from the program supports the value of the care management concept as a means of encouraging patient compliance and partnership with the primary care physician to improve patient healthoutcomes. Next steps call for expanded recipient education and outreach efforts to retain patients in the pilot program and efforts to streamline the process for physicians.



*Tina Ledbetter assists Dr. Lewis Doggett, M.D. in navigating Medicaid's QTool.*

- The TFQ project's effort to create standardized data exchange with other state health and human service agencies is progressing as Medicaid and the Alabama Department of Senior Services prepare to test an online interface and data exchange on shared clients as well as a quality audit process and an inter-agency complaint information system. The interface will be accessed via the QTool portal and is expected to be ready to test in late summer.
- Project evaluation will be conducted by the University of Alabama Birmingham School of Public Health and will use a logic model based on formative and summative principles outlined in the Agency's original grant along with CMS guidelines. Additionally, the project evaluation team will incorporate "realistic" evaluation principles to evaluate the project's impact in changing the established social system. Planned research methods include interviews and observation; monitoring of QTool use; surveys of clients, care managers and stakeholders and analysis of care management records and claims data.



*Janice Clark, office manager at Anniston Pediatrics, views the QTool screens with Tina Ledbetter.*